

Federal Military Unit

Ricoh provides the key to completely automating the paper-to-electronic document storage process in ARIMS

This wasn't only about changing process. We gave the unit a tool to help them get their critical records where they need to go — securely.

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

This military unit is comprised of citizen soldiers who serve their state when local emergencies arrive, and serve their country when deployed to foreign lands. The state unit has thousands of soldiers serving throughout its air and land units. And, all of these soldiers come with voluminous records associated to them — files that have to be ingested into DOD-approved records information systems — iPERMS (Interactive Personnel Electronic Records Management System) for personnel records and ARIMS (Army Records Information Management System) for everything else. In addition, they also send records via email and into folders, SharePoint® and other online government systems.

CHALLENGE

- Onerous process to digitize all paper records
- Knowledge deficit when soldier was promoted or deployed
- Lapses when records weren't entered into the system
- Risk of digital record non-compliance
- Service member frustration with record request delays

For both former and current citizen soldiers, many of their records originated on paper while newer incoming documents are a mix of both paper and electronic records. To manage this mix, trained personnel are necessary to get documents organized, prepared and routed where they need to go. However, their current workflow lacked appropriate permissions that could lead to spillage of sensitive information.

In addition, this unit has revolving personnel assigned to this task. Part of their training involves how to scan hard copy documents and organize them into various file folder systems with pertinent metadata, in the correct file format. However, when the soldier responsible for this task earns a promotion in rank, is deployed overseas or receives a new duty assignment — that knowledge leaves with them. Due to Department of Defense (DoD) personnel reductions over the last 10 years, there are no backups to immediately take over that responsibility.

Consequently, there were periods of time when paper records weren't being entered into the system, and if they were, the information was often incorrect. The military unit was concerned it wouldn't be able to maintain digital record compliance and service members would become frustrated by the inability to access their records in a timely fashion. In turn, this could hold up promotions and associated pay, and delay receipt of other forms and information the soldier would need. The unit tried to mitigate this by temporarily assigning untrained staff to the task, which produced very unreliable results and led to a very inefficient process.

Case Study

RESULTS

- Information spillage no longer a concern
- Dramatically improved operational efficiency
- Compliance with military digital record standards
- Improved service member experience with records requests

With the appropriate permissions, workflow and systems integration in place, information spillage is no longer a concern for this military unit. Operational efficiency has been dramatically improved when it comes to getting original paper documents digitized and into the content management systems. The unit also has the assurance that it will be compliant with the military's digital record standards.

The unit's service member experience with records requests has been greatly improved through faster, more efficient processing. In turn, soldiers and their families now have access to a more complete record of their service that can be quickly and easily accessed.

As soon as a soldier is deployed or moves up in rank, there is a knowledge deficit on how to scan properly and put documents into the unit's ARIMS back end document management system.

HOW WE DID IT

- Developed exclusive process automation software
- Enabled only authenticated users to scan and print
- Prevented leaking of PII and specific identifiers
- Provided complete audit trail
- Completed large backfile scanning project

This military unit was an existing customer with several hundred of our MFPs installed throughout its locations. We had also worked with a different state branch to develop a scanning workflow solution, which gave us insight into this military unit's specific workflows, requirements and funding challenges. Other vendors had occasionally come to this unit with solutions that could only handle part of their workflow. So, we developed a new workflow that the others couldn't address — connecting into the ARIMS back end document management system.

We worked with our top software partners to develop an exclusive workflow to tie into the statewide MFP fleet and automate the entire process with ARIMS. As a result, the unit didn't have to wait months to a year for a new staff member to undergo training to migrate documents into the old file folder system. Any soldier with the proper credentials and permissions could scan the documents — anytime — into an MFP and send the documents to the document management systems: iPERMS or ARIMS. The solution enables only authenticated users to access the various databases, depending on the credentials in Active Directory (AD), via Common Access Card (CAC) authentication. The solution also provided them the ability to manage printing or scanning based on AD credentials. For instance, it prevents various ranks or departments from printing anything with certain identifiers — such as a social security number string, personally identifiable information (PII) or words such as "confidential" or "top secret." If a document had any of these identifiers, they were quarantined to Information Assurance to approve or hold the job.

Case Study

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We also completed a large back file scanning project for the unit, taking legacy paper records — some dating back 100 years — to one of our Business Information Services (BIS) centers and returned them on hard drives for downloading into the ARIMS bulk archive tool (BAT). As a result, the unit was able to provide the records to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) as well as keep a record for the branch.

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